



## Grant Opportunity Guidelines

# Australia-India Strategic Research Fund: Collaborative Research Projects Round 15

<b>Opening date:</b>	16 January 2023
<b>Closing date and time:</b>	1700 (5:00pm) Australian Eastern Daylight Time on 15 March 2023  Please take account of time zone differences when submitting your application.
<b>Commonwealth policy entity:</b>	Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Administering entity:</b>	Department of Industry, Science and Resources
<b>Enquiries:</b>	If you have any questions, contact us on 13 28 46.
<b>Date guidelines released:</b>	16 January 2023
<b>Type of grant opportunity:</b>	Open competitive

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# 1. Australia-India Strategic Research Fund: Collaborative Research Projects Round 15 processes

## **The Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (AISRF) is designed to achieve Australian Government objectives**

This grant opportunity is part of the above grant program which contributes to Department of Industry, Science and Resources' Outcome 1. The Department works with stakeholders to plan and design the grant program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#).



## **The grant opportunity opens**

We publish the grant guidelines on [business.gov.au](#) and GrantConnect.



## **You complete and submit a grant application**

You complete the application form, addressing all the eligibility and assessment criteria in order for your application to be considered.



## **We assess all grant applications**

We review the applications against eligibility criteria and notify you if you are not eligible. An independent committee of experts assess eligible applications against the assessment criteria including an overall consideration of value with relevant money and compare it to other eligible applications.



## **Australian and Indian Governments consider projects**

The Australian and Indian Governments jointly consider which project to support under this round and provide advice to the decision maker.



## **Grant decisions are made**

The decision maker decides which applications are successful.



## **We notify you of the outcome**

We advise you of the outcome of your application. We may not notify unsuccessful applicants until grant agreements have been executed with successful applicants.



## **We enter into a grant agreement**

We will enter into a grant agreement with successful applicants. The type of grant agreement is based on the nature of the grant and proportional to the risks involved.



## **Delivery of grant**

You undertake the grant activity as set out in your grant agreement. We manage the grant by working with you, monitoring your progress and making payments.



## **Evaluation of the AISRF: Collaborative Research Projects Round 15**

We evaluate the specific grant activity and the AISRF as a whole. We base this on information you provide to us and that we collect from various sources.

## 2. About the grant program

The Australia-India Strategic Research Fund (the program) commenced in 2006. The current phase of the program was announced as part of the 2020-21 Federal Budget.

The objectives of the program are to:

- increase the uptake of leading science and technology by supporting collaboration between Australian and Indian researchers in strategically focused, leading-edge scientific research and technology projects
- strengthen strategic alliances between Australian and Indian researchers
- facilitate Australia and India's access to the global science and technology system.

The intended outcomes of the program are:

- greater profile and reputational gains for Australian and Indian science, research and innovation capabilities in each other's country and globally
- stronger links between Australian and Indian research and business communities to grow long-term collaboration
- an opportunity for any postgraduate students involved in the project to spend time in the other country and work with collaborating researchers to help form lifelong networks and build on institutional links
- enhancement of Australia's reputation as a destination of choice for Indian tertiary students
- strengthening and deepening of the bilateral diplomatic relationship and strategic partnership.

There will be other grant opportunities as part of this program and we will publish the opening and closing dates and any other relevant information on [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#).

We administer the program according to the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) (CGRGs).<sup>1</sup>

### 2.1. About the Collaborative Research Projects Round 15 grant opportunity

These guidelines contain information for the Collaborative Research Projects Round 15 grants. This grant opportunity was announced under the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund.

This document sets out:

- the eligibility and assessment criteria
- how we consider and assess grant applications
- how we notify applicants and enter into grant agreements with grantees
- how we monitor and evaluate grantees' performance
- responsibilities and expectations in relation to the opportunity.

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources (the department) is responsible for administering this grant opportunity. The Government of India's Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Department of Biotechnology (DBT) deliver the program in India. The Australian and Indian departments agree on the program parameters and jointly decide the outcomes of each funding round.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.finance.gov.au/government/commonwealth-grants/commonwealth-grants-rules-guidelines>

We have defined key terms used in these guidelines in the glossary at section 14.

You should read this document carefully before you fill out an application.

### 3. Grant amount and grant period

For this grant opportunity \$6 million is available over 3 years from 2023-24 to 2026-27.

#### 3.1. Grants available

The grant amount will be up to 100% of eligible project expenditure (grant percentage).

- The minimum grant amount is \$500,000.
- The maximum grant amount is \$1,000,000.

You cannot use funding from other Commonwealth, State, Territory or local government grants to fund the balance of project expenditure not covered by the grant. We cannot fund your project if it receives funding from another government grant for the same activities. If you receive Australian government funding for your core activities, you will need to demonstrate that the activity you are carrying out for the project is additional to your core activities. If you have received Australia-India Strategic Research Fund project funding in a previous round, you cannot receive funding for the same activities in this round.

#### 3.2. Project period

The maximum project period is 3 years.

### 4. Eligibility criteria

We cannot consider your application if you do not satisfy all eligibility criteria.

#### 4.1. Who is eligible?

To be eligible you must:

- have an Australian Business Number (ABN)

and be one of the following entities:

- a company, incorporated in Australia
- an incorporated not for profit organisation
- a publicly funded research organisation (PFRO) as defined in section 14
- a Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)
- an incorporated trustee on behalf of a trust
- an Australian State/Territory Government agency or body
- an entity, incorporated in Australia.

Joint applications involving more than one Australian partner are acceptable, provided the lead applicant is the main driver of the project and is eligible to apply. For further information on joint applications, refer to section 7.2.

#### 4.2. Additional eligibility requirements

We can only accept applications:

- That have a primary Indian partner who has submitted, or is in the process of submitting, a corresponding application to India's DST or DBT

- which include all mandatory attachments.

We cannot waive the eligibility criteria under any circumstances.

### 4.3. Who is not eligible?

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- an organisation, or your project partner is an organisation, included on the National Redress Scheme's website on the list of 'Institutions that have not joined or signified their intent to join the Scheme' ([www.nationalredress.gov.au](http://www.nationalredress.gov.au))
- an employer of 100 or more employees that has [not complied](#) with the *Workplace Gender Equality Act (2012)*
- any organisation not included in section 4.1.

### 4.4. Priority Areas

Your project must be in a priority area, the priority areas for Australia-India Strategic Research Fund Round 15 are:

#### **Indo-Australian Science and Technology Fund (*administered by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) in India*)**

- Artificial intelligence and machine learning
- New and renewable energy technologies (particularly ultra-low-cost solar and clean hydrogen)
- Urban mining and electronic waste recycling

#### **Indo-Australian Biotechnology Fund (*administered by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) in India*)**

- Antimicrobial resistance
- RNA vaccines and therapies

The lead organisation can submit a maximum of two applications but only one application per priority area.

## 5. What the grant money can be used for

### 5.1. Eligible activities

To be eligible your project must:

- be consistent with the objectives and intended outcomes of the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund, refer to section 2
- include eligible activities and eligible expenditure
- involve research in a priority area (see section 4.4).

Eligible activities must relate directly to the project and can include:

- joint scientific research projects with Indian partner/s
- application and commercialisation of research outcomes
- exchanges and secondments of personnel between Australia and India
- conferences and workshops
- new research-related information sharing and communication initiatives

- joint traditional research outputs of books, chapters, journal articles and conference publications.

We may also approve other activities.

## 5.2. Eligible expenditure

You can only spend Australian grant funds on eligible expenditure you have incurred on an agreed project as defined in your grant agreement.

- For guidance on eligible expenditure, see appendix A
- For guidance on ineligible expenditure, see appendix B.

We may update the guidance on eligible and ineligible expenditure from time to time. If your application is successful, the version in place when you submitted your application applies to your project.

If your application is successful, we may ask you to verify project costs that you provided in your application. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate (who is an AusIndustry Manager within the department with responsibility for the program) makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be a direct cost of the project
- be spent in Australia, except for Australian researchers' travel expenses within India
- be incurred by you for required project audit activities
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

You must incur the project expenditure between the project start and end date for it to be eligible unless stated otherwise.

You must not commence your project until you execute a grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

## 6. The assessment criteria

You must address all assessment criteria in your application. We will assess your application based on the weighting given to each criterion.

The application form asks questions that relate to the assessment criteria below. The amount of detail and supporting evidence you provide in your application should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount requested. You should provide evidence to support your answers, including citing key research publications where relevant. The application form displays size limits for answers.

The information contained in your application must be consistent with that provided to the Indian government by your Indian partner.

We will only consider funding applications that score highly against all assessment criteria and who score at least 50% in each criterion as these represent best value for money.

### 6.1. Assessment criterion 1

#### **How your project will advance research in priority areas (40 points)**

You should demonstrate this by identifying:

- a. the specific problem or issue your project will address, why it needs to be addressed, how your project will address it, including the rationale for your approach and any existing research you will build on, and where relevant identify the current competitive landscape in your chosen area of research, including a comparative analysis of similar or alternate technology
- b. the expected outcomes of your research, their relevance to any end users, including potential for commercialisation where relevant, and how they will advance the knowledge base of your chosen area of research.

## 6.2. Assessment criterion 2

### **Your capacity, capability and resources to deliver the project (30 points)**

You should demonstrate this by:

- a. identifying your access to personnel with the right skills and experience, including management and technical staff, and to any infrastructure, capital equipment, technology and intellectual property required for the project
- b. providing a sound project plan, to be provided as an attachment, to manage and monitor the project, including arrangements for governance, security and intellectual property rights and the identification of risks and mitigation strategies, as well as promoting research integrity and security
- c. justifying the funding amount requested and your ability to fund project costs not covered by the grant. Outline the total investment the grant will leverage and explain how this benefits your project, including grant funding from the Indian (and any other foreign) government.

## 6.3. Assessment criterion 3

### **Benefits for both Australia and India (30 points)**

You should demonstrate this by identifying:

- a. the social, environmental and/or economic short-term and long-term benefits to be gained from your project:
  - for Australia
  - for India
- b. how your project will develop robust and sustainable collaborations between Australia and India in your chosen area of research.

## 7. How to apply

Before applying you should read and understand these guidelines, the sample [application form](#) and if applicable the sample [grant agreement](#) published on [business.gov.au](#) and GrantConnect.

You can only submit an application during a funding round. We will publish the opening and closing dates for each round on [business.gov.au](#).

You will need to set up an account to access our online [portal](#). The portal allows you to apply for and manage a grant or service in a secure online environment.

To apply, you must:

- complete the online [application form](#) via [business.gov.au](#)

- provide all the information requested
- address all eligibility and assessment criteria
- include all necessary attachments.

You will receive confirmation when you submit your application. You can view and print a copy of your submitted application on the portal for your own records.

Your application must have an identical project title to the application your Indian primary partner submits to India's DST or the DBT. This is important to enable matching of applications received in both countries as part of the eligibility checking process.

You are responsible for making sure your application is complete and accurate. Giving false or misleading information is a serious offence under the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth). If we consider that you have provided false or misleading information we may not progress your application. If you find an error in your application after submitting it, you should call us immediately on 13 28 46.

If we find an error or information that is missing, we may ask for clarification or additional information from you that will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your submission after the application closing time.

If you need further guidance around the application process, or if you have any issues with the portal, [contact us](#) at [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) or by calling 13 28 46.

## 7.1. Attachments to the application

You must provide the following documents with your application:

- a letter of support from the lead organisation demonstrating and clearly articulating the organisation's financial support (cash and/or in-kind) for the project, and a commitment to engage in the research collaboration (template provided on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au))
- a letter of support from each partner organisation (template provided on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au)). Each letter of support should include:
  - details of the project partner
  - an overview of how the project partner will work with the lead organisation and any other project partners in the group to successfully complete the project
  - an outline of the relevant experience and/or expertise the project partner will bring to the group
  - the roles/responsibilities the project partner will undertake, and the resources (including cash and in-kind) it will contribute (if any)
  - any affiliations with foreign governments, including through participation in foreign talent programs (other than India)
  - details of a nominated management level contact officer.
- curriculum vitae (CV) for both Australian and Indian project managers and other key personnel (template provided on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au)). You will need to combine all CVs into one attachment
- a sound project plan including arrangements for governance, security and intellectual property rights and the identification of risks and mitigation strategies (up to 5 A4 pages)
- trust deed (where applicable).

You must attach supporting documentation in line with the instructions provided within the form. You should only attach requested documents. The total of all attachments cannot exceed 20MB. We will not consider information in attachments that we do not request.

## 7.2. Joint applications

Where more than one Australian partner is involved in a project, you must appoint a lead organisation. Only the lead organisation can submit the application form and enter into the grant agreement with the Commonwealth.

The application should identify all other members of the proposed group and include a letter of support from each of the project partners (as detailed in section 7.1).

You must have a formal arrangement in place with all parties prior to execution of the grant agreement.

The lead organisation will manage the Australian component of the project.

## 7.3. Timing of grant opportunity

You can only submit an application between the published opening and closing dates. We cannot accept late applications.

If you are successful, we expect you will be able to commence your project around August 2023.

Table 1: Expected timing for this grant opportunity

Activity	Timeframe
Assessment of applications	10 weeks
Approval of outcomes of selection process	6 weeks
Negotiations and award of grant agreements	6 weeks
Notification to unsuccessful applicants	2 weeks
Earliest start date of project	Agreement execution date
End date of grant commitment	28 February 2027

## 8. The grant selection process

We first review your application against the eligibility criteria. If eligible, we will then assess it against the assessment criteria. Only eligible applications will proceed to the assessment stage.

### 8.1. Independent committee of experts

Eligible applications are referred to an independent committee of experts (the committee). Experts are selected in each priority area through a rigorous analysis of academic qualifications, conflicts of interest, availability and taking into consideration gender and diversity. The committee are required to perform their duties in accordance with the CGRGs.

The committee and the department may also seek additional advice from independent technical experts and other government agencies where appropriate.

The committee will assess your application against the assessment criteria and compare it to other eligible applications in a funding round before recommending which projects to fund. The committee decides which projects to refer for consideration by Australian and Indian government officials.

The committee will consider your application on its merits, based on:

- how well it addresses the criteria
- if competitive, how it compares to other applications
- whether it provides value with relevant money.

When assessing whether the application represents value with relevant money, we will have regard to:

- the overall objectives of the grant opportunity
- the evidence provided to demonstrate how your project contributes to meeting those objectives
- the relative value of the grant sought
- any national interest, financial, legal/regulatory, governance or other issue or risk that we identify during any due diligence process that we conduct in respect of the applicant. This includes its directors, officers, senior managers, key personnel, its related bodies corporate (as defined in the *Corporations Act*) or its application that could bring the Australian Government into disrepute if it were to fund the applicant. Such issues and risks include where we consider that funding the application under this grant opportunity is likely to directly conflict with Australian Government policy or affect Australia's national security. Where possible<sup>2</sup>, we will provide the applicant with an opportunity to comment on any material risks identified during this due diligence process prior to our determining the extent (if any) to which those issues or risks affect our assessment of the application and, if so, whether they are sufficient to warrant the exclusion of the application from the assessment process.

To recommend an application for funding it must score highly against each assessment criterion and score at least 50% on each criterion.

If the selection process identifies unintentional errors in your application, we may contact you to correct or clarify the errors, but you cannot make any material alteration or addition.

## 8.2. Australian and Indian government deliberations

Each government assesses applications independently in accordance with its own processes and decides which projects to refer for joint consideration.

Drawing on recommendations from the committee and its Indian counterparts, the Australian and Indian governments then determine which of the recommended projects to support taking into account the outcomes of each country's assessment processes.

Projects are typically funded by both the Australian and Indian Governments. The Australian or Indian Government may consider unilaterally funding a project in very rare circumstances, subject to availability of funds and agreement by both governments. Similarly, should either government decide to rescind or terminate its grant after the project has commenced, the other government may continue with its own grant at its discretion.

## 8.3. Who will approve grants?

The Program Delegate decides which grants to approve taking into account the recommendations of the committee, national interest considerations, due diligence, the outcome of negotiations between the Australian and Indian Governments and the availability of grant funds.

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<sup>2</sup> Subject to national security and other considerations.

The Program Delegate's decision is final in all matters, including:

- the grant approval
- the grant funding to be awarded
- any conditions attached to the offer of grant funding.

We cannot review decisions about the merits of your application.

The Program Delegate will not approve funding if there is insufficient program funds available across relevant financial years for the program.

## 9. Notification of application outcomes

We will advise you of the outcome of your application in writing. If you are successful, we advise you of any specific conditions attached to the grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will give you an opportunity to discuss the outcome with us.

## 10. Successful grant applications

### 10.1. Grant agreement

You must enter into a legally binding grant agreement with the Commonwealth. We will use a standard grant agreement. The grant agreement has general terms and conditions that cannot be changed. A sample [grant agreement](#) is available on [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#).

We must execute a grant agreement with you before we can make any payments. Execute means both you and the Commonwealth have signed the agreement. We are not responsible for any expenditure you incur until a grant agreement is executed. You must not start any Australia-India Strategic Research Fund: Collaborative Research Projects Round 15 activities until a grant agreement is executed.

The approval of your grant may have specific conditions determined by the assessment process or other considerations made by the Program Delegate. We will identify these in the offer of grant funding.

If you enter a grant agreement under the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund: Collaborative Research Projects Round 15, you cannot receive other grants for the same activities from other Commonwealth, State or Territory granting programs.

The Commonwealth may recover grant funds if there is a breach of the grant agreement.

### 10.2. Standard grant agreement

We will use a standard grant agreement for medium or larger projects where we consider your project to be more complex.

You will have 30 days from the date of a written offer to execute this grant agreement with the Commonwealth. During this time, we will work with you to finalise details.

The offer may lapse if both parties do not sign the grant agreement within this time. Under certain circumstances, we may extend this period. We base the approval of your grant on the information you provide in your application. We will review any required changes to these details to ensure they do not impact the project as approved by the Program Delegate.

### 10.3. Project specific legislation, policies and industry standards

You must comply with all relevant laws and regulations and Australian Government sanctions in undertaking your project. You must also comply with the specific legislation/policies/industry standards that follow. It is a condition of the grant funding that you meet these requirements. We will include these requirements in your grant agreement.

In particular, you will be required to comply with:

- State/Territory legislation in relation to working with children.

#### 10.3.1. Ethics and research practices

The [Australian Research Council<sup>3</sup>](#) web site provides a series of publications that outline the principles of ethical conduct in research. All proposals and funded research projects must conform to the principles and requirements of these publications (and their successor documents), including but not limited to the:

- *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018) and successor documents
- *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007, updated 2018)
- *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* (2013).

If there is any conflict or inconsistency between a successor document and its predecessor, then the successor document prevails.

#### 10.3.2. Intellectual property rights

Applicants must provide details of intellectual property (IP) arrangements in their applications. This includes both the use of IP in the project and the proposed ownership rights to IP generated by the project as well as strategies for protecting Australia's interests. Where IP is likely to be generated by the project, successful applicants are required to conclude protocols or contracts with their Indian and other collaborating partners on the management of IP issues. These agreements should be in accordance with laws and regulations in Australia and India and provide for:

- adequate and effective protection and equitable distribution of any benefits from IP rights created in or resulting directly from cooperative activities (foreground IP rights)
- ownership of foreground IP rights to be allocated on the basis of respective contribution and equitable interests
- terms and conditions for the commercialisation and other forms of dissemination of the foreground IP rights
- adequate and effective protection of IP rights provided by the organisations, enterprises and institutions prior to or in the course of such cooperative activities, for example, the licensing or utilisation of such IP rights on equitable terms (background IP rights).

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.arc.gov.au/policies-strategies/policy/codes-and-guidelines>

Australian participants should approach IP negotiations in line with the principles outlined on [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au)<sup>4</sup> and the [National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research \(2017\)](#).<sup>5</sup>

## 10.4. How we pay the grant

The grant agreement will state the:

- maximum grant amount we will pay
- proportion of eligible expenditure covered by the grant (grant percentage)
- any in-kind contributions you or a third party will make
- any financial contribution provided by you or a third party.

We will not exceed the maximum grant amount under any circumstances. If you incur extra costs, you must meet them yourself.

We will make payments according to an agreed schedule set out in the grant agreement. Payments are subject to satisfactory progress on the project.

## 10.5. Tax obligations

If you are registered for the Goods and Services Tax (GST), where applicable we will add GST to your grant payment and provide you with a recipient created tax invoice. You are required to notify us if your GST registration status changes during the project period. GST does not apply to grant payments to government related entities.<sup>6</sup>

Grants are assessable income for taxation purposes, unless exempted by a taxation law. We recommend you seek independent professional advice on your taxation obligations or seek assistance from the [Australian Taxation Office](#). We do not provide advice on tax.

# 11. Announcement of grants

We will publish non-sensitive details of successful projects on GrantConnect. We are required to do this by the [Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines](#) unless otherwise prohibited by law. We may also publish this information on [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au). This information may include:

- name of your organisation
- title of the project
- description of the project and its aims
- amount of grant funding awarded
- Australian Business Number
- business location
- your organisation's industry sector.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://business.gov.au/planning/protect-your-brand-idea-or-creation>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.arc.gov.au/policies-strategies/policy/national-principles-intellectual-property-management-publicly-funded-research>

<sup>6</sup> See Australian Taxation Office ruling GSTR 2012/2 available at [ato.gov.au](https://ato.gov.au)

## 12. How we monitor your grant activity

### 12.1. Keeping us informed

You should let us know if anything is likely to affect your project or organisation.

We need to know of any key changes to your organisation or its business activities, particularly if they affect your ability to complete your project, carry on business and pay debts due. Where security issues are identified, they should be reported to the department as soon as possible.

You must also inform us of any changes to your:

- name
- addresses
- nominated contact details
- bank account details.

You must also inform us of any material changes in the circumstances of project partners and personnel including:

- changes to key personnel
- significant changes to company ownership or structure
- significant variations in the level of financial and in-kind support provided
- affiliations which may pose a conflict of interest, such as foreign interests of key personnel.

If you become aware of a breach of terms and conditions under the grant agreement you must contact us immediately.

You must notify us of events relating to your project and provide an opportunity for the Minister or their representative to attend.

### 12.2. Reporting

You must submit reports in line with the grant agreement. We will provide the requirements for these reports as appendices in the grant agreement. We will remind you of your reporting obligations before a report is due. We will expect you to report on:

- progress against agreed project milestones
- project expenditure, including expenditure of grant funds
- contributions of participants directly related to the project.

The amount of detail you provide in your reports should be relative to the project size, complexity and grant amount.

We will monitor the progress of your project by assessing reports you submit and may conduct site visits to confirm details of your reports if necessary. Occasionally we may need to re-examine claims, seek further information or request an independent audit of claims and payments.

#### 12.2.1. Progress reports

Progress reports must:

- include details of your progress towards completion of agreed project activities
- show the total eligible expenditure incurred to date
- include evidence of expenditure (if requested)

- be submitted by the report due date (you can submit reports ahead of time if you have completed relevant project activities).

We will only make grant payments when we receive satisfactory progress reports.

You must discuss any project or milestone reporting delays with us as soon as you become aware of them.

### 12.2.2. End of project report

When you complete the project, you must submit an end of project report.

End of project reports must:

- include the agreed evidence as specified in the grant agreement
- identify the total eligible expenditure incurred for the project
- include a declaration that the grant money was spent in accordance with the grant agreement and to report on any underspends of the grant money
- be submitted by the report due date.

### 12.2.3. Ad-hoc reports

We may ask you for ad-hoc reports on your project. This may be to provide an update on progress, or any significant delays or difficulties in completing the project.

### 12.2.4. Independent audits

We may ask you to provide an independent audit report. An audit report will verify that you spent the grant in accordance with the grant agreement. The audit report requires you to prepare a statement of grant income and expenditure. The report template is available on [business.gov.au](https://www.business.gov.au) and [GrantConnect](#).

## 12.3. Compliance visits

We may visit you during the project period, or at the completion of your project to review your compliance with the grant agreement. We may also inspect the records you are required to keep under the grant agreement. For large or complex projects, we may visit you after you finish your project. We will provide you with reasonable notice of any compliance visit.

## 12.4. Grant agreement variations

We recognise that unexpected events may affect project progress. In these circumstances, you can request a variation to your grant agreement, including:

- changing project milestones
- extending the timeframe for completing the project but within the maximum period as specified in section 3.2
- changing project activities.

The program does not allow for:

- an increase of grant funds.

If you want to propose changes to the grant agreement, you must put them in writing before the project end date. We can provide you with a variation request template.

If a delay in the project causes milestone achievement and payment dates to move to a different financial year, you will need a variation to the grant agreement. We can only move funds between

financial years if there is enough program funding in the relevant year to allow for the revised payment schedule. If we cannot move the funds, you may lose some grant funding.

You should not assume that a variation request will be successful. We will consider your request based on factors such as:

- how it affects the project outcome
- consistency with the program policy objective, grant opportunity guidelines and any relevant policies of the department
- changes to the timing of grant payments
- availability of program funds.

## 12.5. Evaluation

We will evaluate the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund grant opportunity to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved. We may use information from your application and project reports for this purpose. We may also interview you, or ask you for more information to help us understand how the grant impacted you and to evaluate how effective the program was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to two years after you finish your project for more information to assist with this evaluation.

## 12.6. Grant acknowledgement

If you make a public statement about a project funded under the program, including in a brochure or publication, you must acknowledge the grant by using the following:

'This project received grant funding from the Australian Government.'

# 13. Probity

We will make sure that the grant opportunity process is fair, according to the published guidelines, incorporates appropriate safeguards against fraud, unlawful activities and other inappropriate conduct and is consistent with the CGRGs.

## 13.1. Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interest could affect the performance of the grant opportunity or program. There may be a conflict of interest, or perceived conflict of interest, if our staff, any member of a committee or advisor and/or you or any of your personnel has a:

- professional, commercial or personal relationship with a party who is able to influence the application selection process, such as an Australian Government officer or member of an external panel
- relationship with or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicants from carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently or
- relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain because the organisation receives a grant under the grant program/ grant opportunity.

As part of your application, we will ask you to declare any perceived or existing conflicts of interests or confirm that, to the best of your knowledge, there is no conflict of interest.

If you later identify an actual, apparent, or perceived conflict of interest, you must inform us in writing immediately.

Conflicts of interest for Australian Government staff are handled as set out in the Australian [Public Service Code of Conduct \(Section 13\(7\)\)](#)<sup>7</sup> of the *Public Service Act 1999* (Cth). Committee members and other officials including the decision maker must also declare any conflicts of interest.

We publish our [conflict of interest policy](#)<sup>8</sup> on the department's website. The Commonwealth policy entity also publishes a conflict of interest policy on its website.

## 13.2. How we use your information

Unless the information you provide to us is:

- confidential information as per 13.2.1, or
- personal information as per 13.2.3,

we may share the information with other government agencies for a relevant Commonwealth purpose such as:

- to improve the effective administration, monitoring and evaluation of Australian Government programs
- for research
- to announce the awarding of grants.

### 13.2.1. How we handle your confidential information

We will treat the information you give us as sensitive and therefore confidential if it meets all of the following conditions:

- you clearly identify the information as confidential and explain why we should treat it as confidential
- the information is commercially sensitive
- disclosing the information would cause unreasonable harm to you or someone else
- you provide the information with an understanding that it will stay confidential.

### 13.2.2. When we may disclose confidential information

We may disclose confidential information to:

- the committee and our Commonwealth employees and contractors, to help us manage the program effectively
- the Auditor-General, Ombudsman or Privacy Commissioner
- the responsible Minister or Assistant Minister
- a House or a Committee of the Australian Parliament.

We may also disclose confidential information if:

- we are required or authorised by law to disclose it
- you agree to the information being disclosed, or

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2019C00057>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf\\_files\\_redirect](https://www.industry.gov.au/sites/default/files/July%202018/document/pdf/conflict-of-interest-and-insider-trading-policy.pdf?acsf_files_redirect)

- someone other than us has made the confidential information public.

We will not be in breach of any confidential obligations if the confidential information we collect from you, or otherwise obtain, on you or your partners is disclosed to employees and contractors of other Australian Government entities for any purpose, including for government administration, consultation, research, monitoring or analysis of our programs and activities.

### 13.2.3. How we use your personal information

We must treat your personal information according to the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). This includes letting you know:

- what personal information we collect
- why we collect your personal information
- to whom we give your personal information.

We may give the personal information we collect from you to our employees and contractors, the committee, and other Commonwealth employees and contractors, so we can:

- manage the program
- administer, consult, research, assess, monitor and analyse our programs and activities.

We, or the Minister, may:

- announce the names of successful applicants to the public
- publish personal information on the department's websites.

You may read our [Privacy Policy](#)<sup>9</sup> on the department's website for more information on:

- what is personal information
- how we collect, use, disclose and store your personal information
- how you can access and correct your personal information.

### 13.2.4. Freedom of information

All documents in the possession of the Australian Government, including those about the program, are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth) (FOI Act).

The purpose of the FOI Act is to give members of the public rights of access to information held by the Australian Government and its entities. Under the FOI Act, members of the public can seek access to documents held by the Australian Government. This right of access is limited only by the exceptions and exemptions necessary to protect essential public interests and private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom the information relates.

If someone requests a document under the FOI Act, we will release it (though we may need to consult with you and/or other parties first) unless it meets one of the exemptions set out in the FOI Act.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.industry.gov.au/data-and-publications/privacy-policy>

### 13.3. National security

Eligible activities under this grant opportunity may have national security implications. It is your responsibility to consider any such implications of the proposed project and identify and manage any risks, particularly relating to export controls, foreign interference and technology transfer.

You should also ensure there are appropriate controls around any sensitive research data including securing intellectual property.

#### 13.3.1. Know Your Partner

You should ensure that you know who you are collaborating with by undertaking appropriate due diligence, proportionate to the risk and subject to available information, on all partners and personnel participating in the project. This should take into account any potential security, ethical, legal and reputational risks, and where necessary, you should be prepared to demonstrate how you will manage and mitigate any identified risks.

#### 13.3.2. Export Controls

As this program involves research collaboration with foreign entities, some provisions of Australia's export controls regime may apply to your project. It is your responsibility to consider the implications, if any, of the relevant legislation on the proposed project before submitting your application, and to comply with any applicable requirements if it is successful. Further information is available on the [Department of Defence website](#).<sup>10</sup>

#### 13.3.3. Foreign Affiliations

Eligible activities under this grant opportunity may involve foreign affiliations<sup>11</sup> which must be disclosed under the conflict of interest policy outlined at section 13.1. Specifically, you must inform us of any relationship between a project participant and any party which is able to influence, interfere with or benefit from the proposed activity. You must also inform us of any material changes to the foreign affiliations of project participants, as outlined at section 12.1.

### 13.4. Disclosure of Commonwealth, State or Territory financial penalties

You must disclose whether any of your board members, management or persons of authority have been subject to any pecuniary penalty, whether civil, criminal or administrative, imposed by a Commonwealth, State, or Territory court or a Commonwealth, State, or Territory entity. If this is the case, you must provide advice to the department regarding the matter for consideration.

### 13.5. Enquiries and feedback

For further information or clarification, you can contact us on 13 28 46 or by [web chat](#) or through our [online enquiry form](#) on business.gov.au.

We may publish answers to your questions on our website as Frequently Asked Questions.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www1.defence.gov.au/business-industry/export/controls>

<sup>11</sup> Including but not limited to, foreign ownership (including foreign government ownership), affiliations with foreign governments, political parties, organisations, institutions or companies, or membership of foreign government talent programs.

Our [Customer Service Charter](#) is available at [business.gov.au](http://business.gov.au). We use customer satisfaction surveys to improve our business operations and service.

If you have a complaint, call us on 13 28 46. We will refer your complaint to the appropriate manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we handle your complaint, you can contact:

Head of Division  
AusIndustry  
Department of Industry, Science and Resources  
GPO Box 2013  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

You can also contact the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#)<sup>12</sup> with your complaint (call 1300 362 072). There is no fee for making a complaint, and the Ombudsman may conduct an independent investigation.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/>

## 14. Glossary

Term	Definition
Application form	The document issued by the Program Delegate that applicants use to apply for funding under the program.
ARC	The Australian Research Council, an independent body established under the <i><u>Australian Research Council Act 2001</u></i> .
AusIndustry	The division of the same name within the department.
CGRGs	The Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines.
Department	The Department of Industry, Science and Resources.
Eligible activities	The activities undertaken by a grantee in relation to a project that are eligible for funding support as set out in 5.1.
Eligible application	An application or proposal for grant funding under the program that the Program Delegate has determined is eligible for assessment in accordance with these guidelines.
Eligible expenditure	The expenditure incurred by a grantee on a project and which is eligible for funding support as set out in 5.2.
Eligible expenditure guidance	The guidance that is provided at Appendix A
Grant agreement	A legally binding contract between the Commonwealth and a grantee for the grant funding.
Grant funding or grant funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth to grantees under the program.
<a href="#">GrantConnect</a>	The Australian Government's whole-of-government grants information system, which centralises the publication and reporting of Commonwealth grants in accordance with the CGRGs.
Grantee	The recipient of grant funding under a grant agreement.
Guidelines	Guidelines that the Minister gives to the department to provide the framework for the administration of the program, as in force from time to time.
Independent expert committee	The body established by the department to consider and assess eligible applications and decide which projects are referred for consideration to Australian and Indian government officials.
Key Personnel	Individuals substantially involved in the project, including employees, contractors and students.
Minister	The Commonwealth Minister for Industry and Science

Term	Definition
Non-income-tax-exempt	Not exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i> (Cth) or under Division 1AB of Part III of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1936</i> (Cth).
Personal information	<p>Has the same meaning as in the <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> (Cth) which is:</p> <p>Information or an opinion about an identified individual, or an individual who is reasonably identifiable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. whether the information or opinion is true or not, and</li> <li>b. whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.</li> </ol>
Postgraduate students	Masters and PhD students enrolled at an Australian higher education institution
Program Delegate	An AusIndustry Manager within the department with responsibility for the program.
Program funding or Program funds	The funding made available by the Commonwealth for the program.
Project	A project described in an application for grant funding under the program.
Publicly funded research organisation (PFRO)	All higher education providers listed at Table A and Table B of the <i>Higher Education Support Act 2003</i> (Cth) and corporate Commonwealth entities, and State and Territory business enterprises which undertake publicly funded research.
Security	Measures taken to protect something, including governance, physical, information and personnel arrangements (e.g. vetting, access and planning). These may sometimes extend to protecting something of national security interest and/or that are key to our global competitiveness in cutting-edge industries, such as advanced, critical or dual-use technologies.

## Appendix A. Eligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on the eligibility of expenditure. We may update this guidance from time to time, so you should make sure you have the current version from the [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au) website before preparing your application.

The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required.

To be eligible, expenditure must:

- be incurred by you within the project period
- be a direct cost of the project
- be spent in Australia, except for Australian researchers' travel expenses within India
- be incurred by you to undertake required project audit activities
- meet the eligible expenditure guidelines.

### A.1 How we verify eligible expenditure

If your application is successful, we will ask you to verify the project budget that you provided in your application when we negotiate your grant agreement. You may need to provide evidence such as quotes for major costs.

The grant agreement will include details of the evidence you may need to provide when you achieve certain milestones in your project. This may include evidence related to eligible expenditure.

If requested, you will need to provide the agreed evidence along with your progress reports.

You must keep payment records of all eligible expenditure, and be able to explain how the costs relate to the agreed project activities. At any time, we may ask you to provide records of the expenditure you have paid. If you do not provide these records when requested, the expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

At the end of the project, you will be required to provide an independent financial audit of all eligible expenditure from the project.

### A.2 Labour expenditure

Eligible labour expenditure for the grant covers the direct labour costs of employees you directly employ on the core elements of the project. We consider a person an employee when you pay them a regular salary or wage, out of which you make regular tax instalment deductions.

Labour expenditure for leadership, administrative or project management tasks is not eligible. We only consider labour expenditure for leadership or administrative staff (such as CEOs, CFOs, accountants and lawyers) as eligible expenditure where they are directly completing eligible project activities. This may include expanding management teams to address project requirements, or the creation of a board. However, we limit these costs to 10% of the total amount of eligible labour expenditure claimed.

Eligible salary expenditure includes an employee's total remuneration package as stated on their Pay As You Go (PAYG) Annual Payment Summary submitted to the ATO. We consider salary-sacrificed superannuation contributions as part of an employee's salary package if the amount is more than what the Superannuation Guarantee requires.

The maximum salary for an employee, director or shareholder, including packaged components that you can claim through the grant is \$175,000 per financial year.

For periods of the project that do not make a full financial year, you must reduce the maximum salary amount you claim proportionally.

You can only claim eligible salary costs when an employee is working directly on agreed project activities during the agreed project period.

### A.3 Labour on-costs and administrative overhead

You may increase eligible salary costs by an additional 30% allowance to cover on-costs such as employer paid superannuation, payroll tax, workers compensation insurance, and overheads such as office rent and the provision of computers.

You should calculate eligible salary costs using the formula below:

$$\text{Eligible salary costs} = \frac{\text{Annual salary package} \times \text{Weeks spent on project}}{52 \text{ weeks}} \times \text{percentage of time spent on project}$$

You cannot calculate labour costs by estimating the employee's worth. If you have not exchanged money (either by cash or bank transactions) we will not consider the cost eligible.

Evidence you will need to provide can include:

- details of all personnel working on the project, including name, title, function, time spent on the project and salary
- ATO payment summaries, pay slips and employment contracts.

### A.4 Contract expenditure

Eligible contract expenditure is the cost of any agreed project activities that you contract others to do. These can include contracting:

- another organisation
- an individual who is not an employee, but engaged under a separate contract.

All contractors must have a written contract prior to starting any project work—for example, a formal agreement, letter or purchase order which specifies:

- the nature of the work they perform
- the applicable fees, charges and other costs payable.

Invoices from contractors must contain:

- a detailed description of the nature of the work
- the hours and hourly rates involved
- any specific plant expenses paid.

Invoices must directly relate to the agreed project, and the work must qualify as an eligible expense. The costs must also be reasonable and appropriate for the activities performed.

We will require evidence of contractor expenditure that may include:

- an exchange of letters (including email) setting out the terms and conditions of the proposed contract work

- purchase orders
- supply agreements
- invoices and payment documents.

You must ensure all project contractors keep a record of the costs of their work on the project. We may require you to provide a contractor's records of their costs of doing project work. If you cannot provide these records, the relevant contract expense may not qualify as eligible expenditure.

## A.5 Travel and overseas expenditure

Eligible travel and overseas expenditure may include:

- economy class return airfares for Australian researchers, including postgraduate students, travelling to India to participate in meetings, workshops and activities related to the project
  - International airfares for Indian researchers travelling to Australia will be met by the Government of India
- economy class domestic transportation for Australian researchers, including postgraduate students, within India
- economy class domestic transportation and associated living expenses for Australian researchers, including postgraduate students, within Australia where such domestic travel is primarily related to the project or where grantees are requested to travel to meet with the department
- visa and insurance costs associated with travel to India
- living expenses, including accommodation and meals, for Indian researchers travelling to Australia to participate in meetings, workshops and activities related to the Project. Support is limited to a maximum of \$300 per person per day, or \$4,000 per person per month, whichever is the lesser amount
  - Living expenses, including accommodation and meals, for Australian researchers travelling to India will be met by the Government of India
- Australian researchers' travel to a country other than India where the primary purpose of travel is to advance the AISRF project and/or to present outcomes of the project at an international conference.

Travel and living expenses combined must not exceed 20% of the approved grant amount.

Travel restrictions imposed by governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as staff policies of individual institutions and businesses, may preclude international and/or domestic travel during part of your project. Please consider carefully to what extent travel is likely to be feasible during the proposed timeframe of your project.

We will consider value for money when determining whether the cost of overseas expenditure is eligible. This may depend on:

- the proportion of total grant funding that you will spend on overseas expenditure
- the proportion of the service providers total fee that will be spent on overseas expenditure
- how the overseas expenditure is likely to aid the project in meeting the program objectives.

## A.6 Direct support costs

Direct support costs of activities including:

- project specific bench fees, consumables, specialist equipment or instruments, freight, and access to facilities necessary to undertake the project

- costs of prototyping and commercialisation translational activities including product design, testing, and initial manufacturing of the prototype.

## A.7 Other eligible expenditure

Other specific expenditures may be eligible as determined by the Program Delegate.

Evidence you need to supply can include supplier contracts, purchase orders, invoices and supplier confirmation of payments.

Grants are intended to contribute towards the cost of eligible activities and not fully fund all project expenses. Not all expenditure on your project may be eligible for grant funding. The Program Delegate makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure and may give additional guidance on eligible expenditure if required. We will only ask you to provide details of cash and in-kind contributions in the application if they cover eligible activities. We will give you an opportunity in your progress and end of project reports to tell us about any additional cash or in-kind contributions that your project has leveraged.

## Appendix B. Ineligible expenditure

This section provides guidance on what we consider ineligible expenditure. We may update this guidance from time to time, so you should make sure you have the current version from the [business.gov.au](https://business.gov.au) website before preparing your application.

The Program Delegate may impose limitations or exclude expenditure, or further include some ineligible expenditure listed in these guidelines in a grant agreement or otherwise by notice to you.

Examples of ineligible expenditure include:

- any activities, equipment or supplies that are already being supported through other sources (including support from the Australian Government)
- any cost incurred prior to the signing of a grant agreement
- Australian researchers' living expenses within India (these costs will be met by the Government of India and should be factored into the Indian partner's grant)
- indirect costs of research, including:
  - institutional overheads and administrative charges (additional to the 30% on-costs allowed under section 5.2)
  - membership of professional organisations and groups
  - non-project-related staff training and development costs
  - communications costs
  - costs that duplicate the in-kind support from the lead applicant or other participants in the project
  - costs associated with the preparation of financial and audit statements, with the exception of the end of project audit costs
  - staff recruitment and relocation costs
  - debt financing
  - capital expenditure for the purchase of assets such as office furniture and equipment, motor vehicles, computers, printers or photocopiers and the construction, renovation or extension of facilities such as buildings and laboratories
  - costs associated with market research for products or research carried out by surveys to assess the size of the market and the price of a particular service or product
  - costs associated with marketing Projects, i.e. activities aimed at creating demand for goods and services of consumers, businesses and government
  - costs such as rental and utilities
  - salaries for non-Australian personnel, including consultants
  - fees for international students, or the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) and Higher Education Loan Programme (HELP) liabilities for students
  - insurance costs (the recipient must maintain adequate insurance or similar coverage for any liability arising as a result of its participation in AISRF funded activities)
  - subscription costs for access by Australian personnel to major international research facilities.

This list is not exhaustive. Other costs may be ineligible where the department assesses they do not directly support the achievement of the planned outcomes for the research activities or they are contrary to the objectives of the AISRF.